

SOCIOLOGY

Delinquency! National Crisis

Something is being done about rise in youthful crime and other evidences of juvenile delinquency as money from Congress and organizations tackles the problem.

BY JUDITH VIORST

► LEAVING his family's squalid one-room apartment, 12-year-old Jimmy heads for the evening's meeting place—a nearby alley. There a bunch of boys are crouched in shooting position, in this case for the shooting of dice. But many of them also know how to shoot more lethal weapons, and some of them, someday, will.

These 12-year-olds, along with precocious 8-year-olds and restless, displaced 18-year-olds, make up the army of juvenile delinquents whose murders, robberies and assaults are front-page news too many times a week. In recent years they have raised—or lowered—J. D. to the status of what Attorney General Robert Kennedy and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover have called a "national crisis."

To meet this crisis Congress in 1961 passed the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act. Many experts believe the concepts embodied in this Act represent the nation's best chance for keeping boys away from guns, and perhaps from crap games too.

Planning and Action Included

But administrators of the Act have

recently been attacked for wasting Government funds. Members of a House Education and Labor subcommittee claimed the money had been dissipated on "grandiose" plans instead of being used for action programs.

The Act actually allows for both planning and action grants, to be given to local and state authorities and public and private organizations. In addition, it grants funds for training programs.

The amount of money involved is comparatively small—\$10 million a year for three years. But the aim of the Act is high: to develop projects that will demonstrate how all available community groups—social workers and psychiatrists, policemen and parole officers, businessmen and community organizers—can work together in an integrated program for juvenile crime prevention.

Projects on the planning level have received several grants during the two years since the Act was passed. But only one action grant—to a New York City project called Mobilization for Youth—has so far been supported.

David Hackett, executive director of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, has vigorously defended the money spent for planning as necessary preparation for comprehensive

community action. He pointed out that despite the many individual programs in the delinquency field the problem gets worse and worse.

"If we don't build successful new community programs," he said, "we are going to see delinquency become a way of life for millions and millions of young people."

Statistics Are Alarming

Mr. Hackett's concern was well supported by the facts. When the Juvenile Delinquency Act was originally proposed in 1961, the nation was confronted with such alarming statistics as these:

—The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimated that the cost of juvenile delinquency to the nation's economy is four billion dollars a year.

—In addition, property estimated at \$115 million is stolen by juveniles annually.

—Half of all arrests for burglary and larceny involve persons under 18 years of age.

—The police deal each year with some two million youths who are in trouble.

—Since 1950, arrests of persons under the age of 18 have more than doubled.

President Kennedy Concerned

A few days before the bill was introduced, President John F. Kennedy, expressing his concern over the steady growth of delinquency in this country, established the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, with the Attorney General as chairman. Other members included the Secretaries of Labor and of Health, Education and Welfare. The purpose of the President's Committee was to coordinate and recommend expansion of current activities relating to juvenile delinquency, and to recommend new programs for prevention, treatment and control.

The President then sent a message to Congress urging the passage of the Juvenile Delinquency Bill. He said:

"Juvenile delinquency and youth offenses diminish the strength and vitality of our nation; they present serious problems to all the communities affected; and they leave indelible impressions upon the people involved, which often cause continuing problems."

Legislators' Views Differ

Discussion of the proposed legislation on the floor of the House evoked everyone's pet theories on the causes and cures of juvenile delinquency.

H. Allen Smith (R-Calif.) referred to the "good strap" his father kept in the house and suggested that "the problem may be parental delinquency."

Clare Hoffman (R-Mich.) thought that juvenile delinquency should be handled by more law enforcement. He said that he would vote for a bill that would "increase



Fremont Davis

HEADED FOR TROUBLE—The boys in this posed picture represent the danger of restless youths with time on their hands and trouble on their minds.

the police force—double it, if you wish—and put the men on the beat with a stick in their hand and a gun at the side.”

Young people will stay out of trouble if they keep busy, said Charles Gubser (R-Calif.). “Let them work,” he recommended, “and you solve the delinquency problem.”

Others referred to the “age of anxiety” children live in, to violence on television and in comic books, to lack of love, lack of education, lack of job opportunities, to slums and poverty, to the deterioration of human values. A variety of approaches and alternatives was suggested, but thanks largely to the efforts of Education subcom-

mittee chairman Edith Green (D-Oreg.) the legislation was finally passed. It became a law on Sept. 22, 1961.

Supporters of the Act recognize that no city in the U.S. is yet coping successfully with its juvenile delinquents. But they believe that the marshalling of all relevant approaches in a well-planned and well-coordinated effort will provide successful models for future programs. And eventually, they hope, this multifaceted attack on the multifaceted problem of juvenile delinquency will enable this country to find useful roles for its purposeless, destructive young.

• Science News Letter, 84:202 Sept. 28, 1963

PUBLIC HEALTH

Leaf-Burning Pollutes Air

► THE FRAGRANT CUSTOM of burning fall leaves is doomed in modern American civilization.

Burning leaves and trash in the backyard is an “enormous source” of air pollution, Charles D. Yaffe, sanitary engineer director at the division of air pollution, U. S. Public Health Service in Washington, told SCIENCE SERVICE.

Autumn leaves should be hauled away or put in a compost pile—but never burned at home, he said.

The smoke that smells so good actually is ashes and half-burned particles that contribute dangerous litter to the air.

Another source of air pollution is an improperly working furnace, Mr. Yaffe pointed out. Apartment and homeowners should have their furnaces inspected by official agents who can offer suggestions for improving the furnace operation and for cutting expensive waste.

Cars in poor working condition not only cost money but contribute to the ever-thickening haze of chemicals in the air. In essence, Mr. Yaffe explained, you are paying out money to pollute the air.

More frequent checks at the garage to correct faulty piston rings and exhaust equipment would lower the working costs on the car and also help keep the air a bit cleaner.

Effective solutions to our air pollution problems lie in large-scale clean-up practices in industries and cities. In an effort to keep the air clean before it gets dirty, air pollution authorities here believe that many regulations and inventions are already clearing the skies.

For instance, cars are now manufactured with an exhaust hose that sends half-burned fumes back to the engine where they are completely burned.

In certain parts of the country, industries maintain filtering devices in their furnaces to keep the belching smoke clean. Cities such as Los Angeles, St. Louis and Chicago have enforced rules that are successfully keeping back the gray pall of smoke, smog and dust.

Americans are gradually becoming more aware of this black problem that costs the nation as much as \$11 billion a year in destroyed crops and damaged property.

They are hoping for fast action on a needed air pollution bill now before the Senate which will obtain more research and enforce more regulations to control the littering of America’s air.

• Science News Letter, 84:203 Sept. 28, 1963

GENERAL SCIENCE

NSF Hopes to Double Top Research Centers

► THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION is planning to start next year an enormous project aimed at doubling the number of first-class scientific centers in the country within ten years.

The effect would be to allow more colleges to get bigger shares of federal science grants. Although 1,107 institutions qualify at present for the grants, half of the money goes to the same 20 large universities, known as “centers of excellence.”

The plan, which must be approved by Congress, is to give large sums of money to a selected score of schools. These schools would be those already having top-rate teaching staffs in particular fields of science but lacking funds to get them over the hump and into NSF’s “excellence” category.

NSF, which is charged with doling out federal money for basic scientific research, also is planning to start next year a “traineeship program.” It is designed to build up the number of first-year graduate students engaged in significant studies.

Science departments of colleges would send NSF their ideas for postgraduate research projects. If the NSF staff likes the projects, it will send money to the departments, which in turn would give the money to the graduates picked to do the research.

The traineeship program is an outgrowth of a recent manpower study which showed that by 1970 the country will need two and a half times its present number of Ph.D.’s in the engineering, mathematical and physical sciences.

The President’s National Science Board has approved both the center development and traineeship programs in principle, but not in detail, Dr. Geoffrey Keller, assistant director of NSF, told the American Chemical Society meeting.

• Science News Letter, 84:203 Sept. 28, 1963

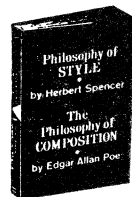


GEM CARBIDE SCRIBER \$1.50 p.p.
Tipped with the hardest metal made by man. Stays sharp 50 times longer than other metals. GEM CARBIDE SCRIBER pencils can engrave on hardened steels, metals, glass, gems, ceramics, plastics, etc. USED BY: jewelers, artists, craftsmen, designers, die cutters, glass cutters, machine shops, laboratories and model builders. FREE pocket clip. FREE instructions. **ALSO GENUINE DIAMOND SCRIBER \$4.00**
HARRY ROSS Scientific & Lab Apparatus
61-L Reade St., N.Y. 7, N.Y.

PHOTO DARKROOM LAB

Featuring a PRECISION 35MM ENLARGER... horizontal type with twin condensing lenses and 3" F.L. projection lens. Produces quality enlargements up to 8"x10". Contact Print Frame takes negatives up to 3 1/2"x4 1/4". Three Plastic Developing Trays, Neon Safelight, Tray Thermometer, Film Clips, Developing Chemicals, Printing and Enlarging Paper and Darkroom Handbook. Everything you need and full instructions. Make quality enlargements for 6¢ make prints for only 2¢. Ideal for greeting cards, souvenirs, etc.
Easy — Fun — Rewarding **\$9.95**
YOUR SATISFACTION OR YOUR MONEY BACK — only 7 DAYS!
AMERICAN BASIC SCIENCE CLUB, INC., Dept. L-9
501 E. CROCKETT ST., SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78202

WRITE FOR MONEY!



Enrich your style through Herbert Spencer's and Edgar Allan Poe's classic principles that have influenced many of the world's great authors. Indispensable for writers eager to get published! Send \$1.00 to PAGEANT PRESS, 101 5th AVE., N. Y. 8, Dept. SN.

LIVE SEAHORSES



Receive LIVE MATED SEAHORSES by Jet Air Mail from FLA. PPD. Supply of food, our catalog and simple instructions for raising these fascinating and exotic little creatures from the deep. All you need is water. The whole family young and old will enjoy many hours observing these amazing aquatic performers. Educational, interesting, Hardy and easy to raise. Live Delivery Guaranteed. \$3.50 a PAIR—\$7.00 SPECIAL—Order TWO PAIR and receive ONE PAIR FREE.

F. F. MARINE LIFE, P.O. Box 626-SL, Dania, Fla.

Riddles

IN MATHEMATICS

Sharpen your wits? Yes! But this book will do more. It will also add to your knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus. No wonder it has been acclaimed



by over 20,000 math enthusiasts! Drawn from every branch of mathematics—this book offers countless hours of fun and entertainment. First, the paradox is clearly explained. Second, the solutions are fully stated. These riddles offer a great opportunity to master the fundamental reasoning that underlies all mathematics.

10 DAYS FREE EXAMINATION

D. VAN NOSTRAND COMPANY, INC.

Dept. 269B, Princeton, N.J. (Est. 1848)

Please send me—for 10 Days FREE EXAMINATION—Northrop's RIDDLES IN MATHEMATICS. I must be delighted or I may return the book within 10 days and owe nothing. Otherwise I will send you \$4.50, plus small delivery cost, as payment in full.

Name _____ (Please Print)

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

SAVE! Enclose payment and we pay delivery cost. Same return privilege with full refund guaranteed.